

Submitted: June 18, 2009  
Approved: June 18, 2009

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

Thursday, May 21, 2009  
Meeting No. 4-2009

Historic District Commissioners present: Max van Balgooy (Chair), Craig Moloney, Janet Hunt McCool, Anita Neal Powell, Jeremy Tucker

Staff present: Robin Ziek, Preservation Planner; Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning

**V. EVALUATION FOR SIGNIFICANCE**

**A. HDC2009-00456 (Continued)**

Applicant: Iglesia De Dios (Pastor Rodriguez)  
Address: 224 Elizabeth Avenue  
Request: Evaluation in response to Demolition Permit

Commissioner Moloney recused himself as he is the project architect, and left the room. Staff Ziek made a brief presentation on new information since the April HDC meeting. She noted a significant history, as a grocery store in association with Mr. Ricks's theatre on Frederick Avenue, but stated the building did not retain integrity for this association. Regarding the association with Mr. Curry, the first African-American to serve on the Rockville Council, and his wife, Mrs. Irene Snowden Curry, they had already moved from the house when he was elected to the Council.

Mrs. Virginia Cooper, of 205 Ashley Avenue, noted a few mistakes in the staff report. Letha E. Payton was her mother. She faulted staff for failing to locate her or her sister, as they still live in Lincoln Park, and have now for 50 years. Her family lived in the theatre building, and moved out of it when Mr. Stern bought the property. He gave them the small grocery store building to use as a house if they could move it, and they accomplished that with the help of the community. The building was moved with her grandmother sitting in the house! Rev. Davis and Mr. Cooper helped Mrs. Payton throughout the process. She acquired the property with assistance from her brother, and renovated it for a residence. They added the front structure of the house. She is also concerned with loss of residential property and residential character of the neighborhood. She's concerned that this loss might continue as the church expands.

Chair van Balgooy noted that the HDC doesn't review land use, but the Planning Commission does.

Beryl Williams, 206 Elizabeth Avenue, noted that she attended the April 16<sup>th</sup> hearing. She would like to see the house remain as affordable housing in the community. There are other parking lots in the neighborhood, and she's not happy with the loss of a house. She also noted

that there were existing tutoring programs already in the neighborhood, and concerned with expansion at the 900 Westmore Avenue property (Iglesia De Dios). Where does it end?

Mrs. Anita Sumerour, 715 Douglass Avenue, spoke and thought that the property did retain two elements of integrity: feeling and association. She would like to see the house retained to continue to tell its story. Part of that story was the determination of people in Lincoln Park to have decent housing.

Chair van Balgooy asked about the zoning, and Chief of Planning, Jim Wasilak, noted that it is R-60 and churches are permitted in this zone.

Commissioner Tucker asked when the building became vacant. People in the audience surmised about five years. He also asked when the church bought it, and staff noted that the church isn't listed as the owner of record on the State Property report, which states the owner as the US Bank National Association Trust.

Commissioner McCool noted that she visited the property. She thought one could support the case for historic significance, and that the period of significance for Lincoln Park goes into the 1950s.

Commissioner Tucker asked if the concept of significance came into play in terms of whether or not this was any different from any other site in Lincoln Park?

Commissioner van Balgooy thought it could be found significant for Criterion I-C: exemplifies the cultural, economic, social ... history of the community.

Commissioner Powell asked if it could meet only one Criterion, and the Chair noted that it can be found Significant with only one Criterion.

While Commissioner Tucker wondered how the house reflected its significance, the Chair noted that it may not reflect an actual "event" but a pattern of life.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Powell moved to recommend 224 Elizabeth Avenue for designation on the basis of Criterion I-C. Commissioner McCool seconded.

**VOTE:** 3-1-1 Approved  
(Commissioner Tucker opposed; Commissioner Moloney recused).